

CHANDAMAMA

MARCH 1980

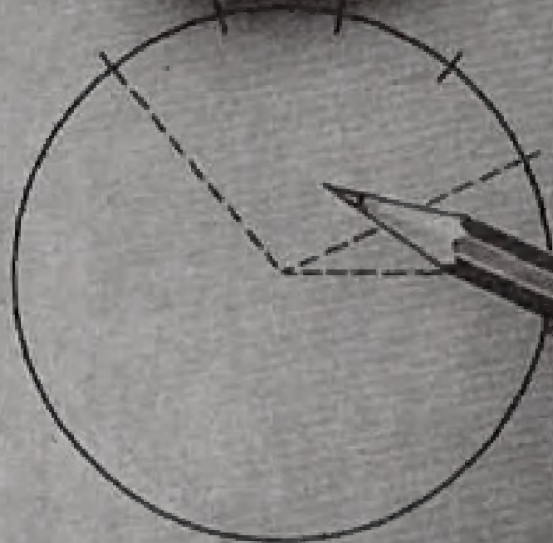
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PLUS EIGHT STORIES AND SEVEN OTHER FEATURES

GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

पुराणमित्येष न साधु सर्वं न चापि काव्यं नवमित्यवद्यम् ।
सन्तः परिक्षयाप्यतरव् भजन्ते मूढः परप्रत्ययनेयबुद्धिः ॥

*Purāṇamityeva na sādhu sarvaṁ
na cāpi kāvyam navamityavadyam
Santah parikṣyānyatarad bhajante
mūḍhaḥ parapratyayaneyabuddhiḥ*

A book is not sacred simply because it is ancient; nor is a book to be ignored simply because it is recently written. The wise give recognition to a work on its merit; fools echo others' opinions.

The Malavikagnimitram



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Founder : CHAKRAPANI

Controlling Editor : NAGI REDDI

ALL IS WELL THAT ENDS WELL

When we met the young Mintoo for the first time, he was even younger. We never knew—nor did he know—how he came to the forest. But we knew that a kind hermit nursed him. Upon the hermit's death, folks of the nearby village offered him shelter, but he chose to dwell in the forest, near the hermit's grave.

We have seen how Jhandoo, the clever monkey, and the noble-hearted baby elephant become his friends. We have also seen in what circumstance he met the sweet little Meena. Through a number of adventures their friendship grew stronger. We have been witnesses to that too.

With a heavy heart we have to inform you that Mintoo will leave us soon—after April. But—watch for the April issue—we assure you that although you will miss him, you will rejoice at the sudden turn of luck that awaits him.

THREE PRINCESSES

7

(The three brothers, out in search of the three lost princesses, encountered a dwarf wizard in the forest. But they outwitted the fellow and obtained from him three kinds of powders and a towel—all with magic powers.)

The Mysterious Castle

Kumar and Nishith were bewildered to see Udayan disappear. They drew the reins of their horses and slowed down.

Soon they were in front of the castle. Encircling the castle was a deep channel. When they saw it, they thanked their luck. Had they not slowed down, they would have almost certainly fallen into the channel.

Had Udayan fallen into this crevice? they wondered. They looked into it again and again, but there was no sign of life inside.

"What is to be done now? There does not seem to be any human habitation anywhere this side of the channel," said Nishith.

"Since the castle was our destination, we must reach it," responded Kumar.

They trotted along the channel with the hope to find a bridge to go over to the other side. But although they went

far, they did not find any bridge.

"It seems the residents of the castle never care to come out, nor any outsider ever visits them!" observed Kumar.

"This only makes me more and more curious. Now, how to cross the channel?" asked Nishith.

The two brothers discussed the problem for a while. Then they retreated for a furlong and came back at great speed. It was thus easy for them to take daring leaps over the channel.

The achievement was thrilling. They slowed down and thanked their luck.

"I wish, Udayan too had taken such a leap and was already in the castle, waiting for us," said Nishith.

But as they went closer to the castle, they felt more and more intrigued.

"Surely, there are no human beings even here!" remarked Kumar.

There were numerous entries into the castle and each entry was flanked by a pair of human statues.

They advanced towards the most prominent gateway, guarded by a pair of huge lions in stone.

As they stood between the lions and two columns which they took to be pillars, Kumar observed, "How living these lions look!"

Suddenly the pillars seemed to shiver. Only then they looked up. What they saw was about to take their breaths away! The pillars were no pillars but two legs of a giant. He was perhaps dozing. Their

conversation woke him up.

Before they could think of running away, the giant knelt down and took hold of them. They became prisoners in his grip.

"Fine! I get two more statues!" roared the giant and then burst into a loud laughter.

Nishith and Kumar guessed that the statues they saw were human visitors like them who had been turned into stones. And the giant intended doing the same to them too.

Their first shock soon gave way to courage. They knew that losing heart in the face of a crisis helped them in no way. They must do their best to get





out of the situation. They looked at each other. In silence they exchanged their thoughts.

Nishith wriggled out of the giant's grip. The giant looked amused. If he did not try to crush him, it was perhaps to see the fun. He knew very well that they cannot run away.

"What do you think of us, giant, sir? Are we here on a pleasure trip? You should look upon us as respectable guests, for, we have brought for you a message from the dwarf wizard!" shouted Nishith. He just guessed that the giant might be having something to do with the dwarf.

The giant's expression changed. He set Kumar on the ground.

"What did you say? The dwarf wizard...? Is he still alive then? I had taken him for dead because of his failure to report! Tell me what his message is!"

"He is well. But it seems someone has come to know his secrets. Those magic powders and the magic towel are stolen. The poor wizard is in a funk. How can he come to meet you? He asked us to obtain from you another towel and a fresh set of those powders," said Nishith.

"Say that! That explains why the fool is not to be seen. But what about his string of beads?" queried the giant.

"Luckily, he still has that!" said Kumar.

"Good. He would have died had he lost it. You be here. I'll fetch the things he needs."

Behind the castle was a forest. The giant took long strides in that direction.

A smile of triumph bloomed on the lips of the two brothers. They had heard that the giants, though huge in size, possessed small wit! They found the belief to be true.

"There is no time to lose. We must explore the mystery of the

palace before the giant returns."

They had to cross a number of gateways before they saw a lake. A flock of beautiful swans played on the water.

The two brothers were thirsty. It was Kumar who stooped down and drank first. Instantly he changed into stone.

Nishith tried to shake Kumar back to life, but in vain.

It was a weird and shocking experience for Nishith to see his brother reduced to that condition.

"I was worried for Udayan. Now Kumar too is lost to me! Had I drunk the water, this would have been my fate too. Nobody in the world would have ever known what really happened to us," murmured Nishith.

He flitted about, not knowing what to do. Hunger and thirst obliged him to pluck a few mangoes from a nearby tree. He then set his teeth on the most ripe one. The change that came over him was most unexpected: he changed into a monkey.

He threw away the mango. "I know not what awaits me further," he thought. He then returned to the statue that was Kumar and circled it in despair.



Next moment he heard a sweet sound. He looked at the lake and saw a handsome swan swimming towards him.

The swan touched the bank and turned into a human being. And, to Nishith's great delight, he proved to be none other than Udayan!

Nishith tried to cry out his brother's name. But he could utter no human speech! He rolled on Udayan's feet and clutched at his clothes. Udayan, who was already surprised to see Kumar's statue, felt even more surprised at the monkey's behaviour.

By and by the question whe-

ther Nishith could have changed into a monkey got formed in his mind. He brought out his powders one by one and threw pinches from them on the statue and on the monkey. But there was no change in the situation.

He sat down, beset with frustration. Just then a swan broke away from its flock and swam to the edge of the water.

"It seems it is hinting at something," thought Udayan. He lifted the swan up and placed it near himself.

Next moment what should he see but a young lady standing before him!

She blushed at Udayan's amazement and hung her head.

"Who are you? What makes you live in the lake assuming the form of a swan?" asked

Udayan.

Like a thunder came a voice from behind them: "What's all this?"

Taken aback, the young lady looked back. The giant was rushing upon them.

"Come, let's save ourselves first," said the young lady. She then pushed Kumar's statue as well as the monkey into the lake. Both changed into swans.

"Come on, let's jump!" said the girl. Taking hold of Udayan's hand, she took a leap into the water. They too turned into swans upon diving into the water.

The roar of the giant shook the castle and the trees. The swans swam fast towards the other end of the lake.

(To Continue)



THE KING VERSUS JHANDOO



The king, notorious for his eccentricity, led an expedition into the forest for the double purpose of hunting as well as catching Mintoo. His search yielded no result.



The king's men did not find Mintoo, but saw Mintoo's friend, the beautiful baby elephant. The king was enamoured of it.



The king ordered his men to take hold of the baby elephant. The elephant trumpeted in protest, but the king's party brought him under control and dragged him away.





Mintoo and Jhandoo wiped each other's tears and decided to do whatever was possible to rescue the baby. Jhandoo followed the royal party.

In the palace, the king's happiness was shattered by Jhandoo. The monkey appeared suddenly and made scratches on him. Then he ran away. He chattered while the king was asleep.



The king's bodyguards tried to capture or kill Jhandoo, but they could not. Jhandoo was as swift as a string of lightning. Desperate, the king himself chased him.



Jhandoo ran to the roof of the palace. The king, mad with anger, pursued him. Jhandoo was on the brink. The king, while trying to catch him, tumbled down - down to his death.



LEGENDS AND PARABLES OF INDIA

THE HERMIT AND THE HUNTER

Long long ago, once the soul of the Buddha had been born in a Brahmin family. His village was situated in the kingdom of Kashi. When Bodhisattva grew up to be a boy, his parents sent him to Taxila, for his education.

Bodhisattva learnt his lessons well. But, instead of returning home, he took to the life of an ascetic.

The young ascetic wandered from place to place. One morning while going through a forest, he sat down near a lake. The quietness of the place quietened his mind; the breeze refreshed him, and the magnificent verdure all around him charmed him.

He sat close to the water. Only a yard away from him, upon the calm water, floated a lotus in full bloom.

Bodhisattva gazed at the lotus for long. More and more attracted towards it, he took his face closer to it and smelled it.

Suddenly a sweet voice star-



tled him. It said, "Young hermit, is it right for you to steal the fragrance of my flower without my permission?"

Bodhisattva saw a goddess-like figure looking at him. She had emerged from the water and was still amidst it.

"Who are you?" asked Bodhisattva with reverence in his voice.

"I am the Presiding Spirit of this lake. You ought to have addressed me in your heart and sought my permission to enjoy the fragrance; you should not have stolen it," said the supernatural being.

"Have I really stolen anything, O Spirit of the Lake?"

asked Bodhisattva.

Instead of answering, the supernatural being suddenly disappeared.

Next moment Bodhisattva saw a hunter, looking rude and violent, entering the lake. The fellow washed his face and drank from the lake. He then plucked the lotus and handled it roughly. Evidently, he had no love for the flower. He plucked it only because it was at hand. He then scattered its petals on the bank and left the place.

Bodhisattva was sad for the flower and sadder for the Spirit of the Lake. Soon the Spirit appeared before him again.

"How is it that you blamed me for merely smelling the lotus, but kept quiet when the hunter destroyed it?" he asked.

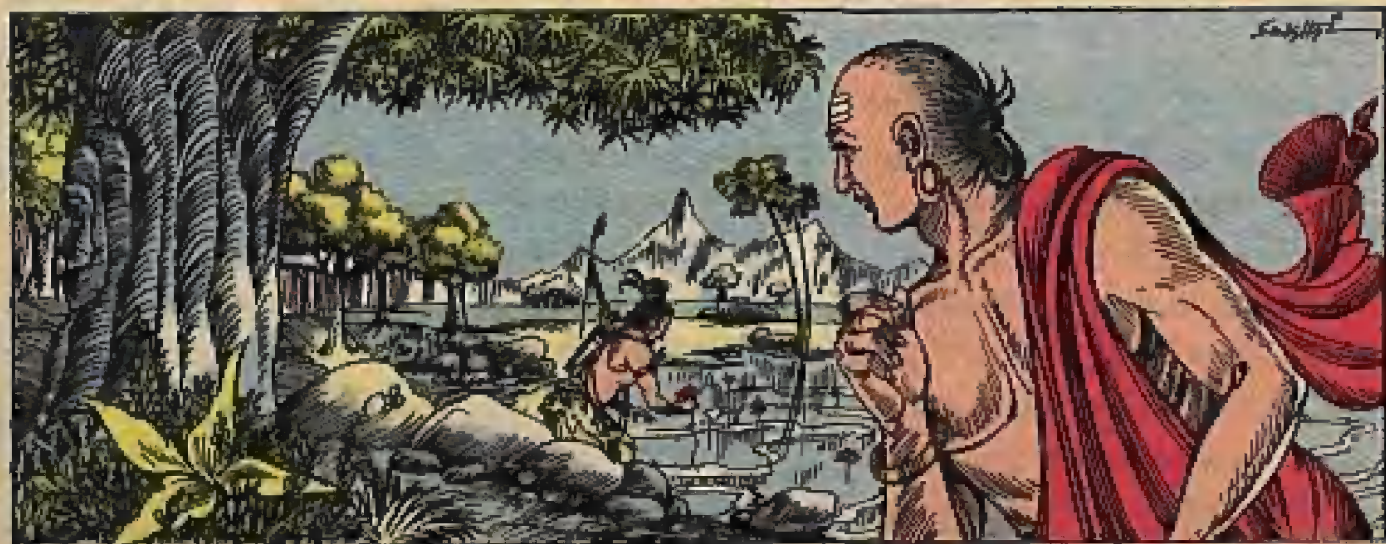
There was a sad smile on the Spirit's lips.

"Young hermit, if there is a small dab of mud on one's clean white clothes, that attracts everybody's attention. Nobody takes note of the dirt in the body of a pig which rolls in the mud. You are pure in your soul. Every action of yours ought to be in keeping with the dignity of your soul. You deserved to be cautioned; so you were cautioned. The hunter has to go a long long way before he comes to a stage when he can understand what I had to say," said the Spirit.

Bodhisattva bowed down. "I am grateful to you, O sweet, compassionate Spirit. Pardon me and point out again if you see anything wrong in my conduct," he said.

Displaying a divine smile, the Spirit disappeared.

From the Buddha Jatakas.



A Goose is a Goose

Once upon a time, in a certain city, there was a Kazi. He being the chief judge of the city, was a highly respected man.

The Kazi had a wife who was as charming as she was intelligent. In fact, she was perfect in everything. She managed the household extremely well and saw to the needs of every member of the family and the servants. Even then she never neglected to look after her husband. She cooked the main dishes for him herself and attended upon him while he ate.

The Kazi took all the women to be like his wife. Whenever a man brought any accusation against a woman, he decided that the man was on the wrong. Even when a husband came with all the proofs against his wife, the Kazi not only chided the man, but also punished him for his audacity in blaming a woman.

"How can a woman ever deceive a man?" was a question which he threw at his listeners often.

The people of the city began





to talk among themselves that no justice can be expected from the Kazi if a case involved a woman. The comment was heard by the Kazi's wife too.

One day a man who had a very wicked wife met the Kazi. Everybody in the city knew how the man was maltreated by his wife. But no sooner had he presented his allegation than the Kazi burst out, "You mischievous fellow, do you think that I am a bachelor? Do you think that I am ignorant of the conduct of wives? How dare you complain against your wife? Go, come with a fine of a thousand mohurs, or you shall

be thrown into gaol!"

The poor man was in despair. First of all, it was a fact that he had been a victim of his wife's tyranny. Secondly, he was too poor to pay a fine of a thousand mohurs.

What was he to do? He stood in a lane outside the Kazi's palace and wept.

One of the maidservants of the Kazi's wife knew the man well and knew how his arrogant wife harassed him. She was moved to pity. Through a rear door, she led the man into the apartment of the lady of the house. The man narrated his misfortune to the lady.

The Kazi's wife thought that it was high time she did something to make her husband wiser. She told the man to go home and not to bother about the fine imposed on him.

That day, while eating his lunch, the Kazi said, "I have not eaten a stuffed goose for quite sometime!"

"You can have it to night," said the lady. The Kazi called a servant and ordered him to go to the market in the evening and buy the most handsome goose available.

The Kazi was returning from his audience hall, at the end

of the afternoon session, when he saw the servant carrying the goose. He was happy to see it.

With much expectation he sat down for dinner and himself took off the cover on the dish which he expected, would be the stuffed goose.

"What's this? Where is the goose?" he shouted. He had uncovered a small sparrow.

"Why! This of course is the bird which the servant bought!" said his wife.

"What nonsense do you speak! What he bought was a goose!" asserted the Kazi.

"In that case, this is the goose!" said the lady.

"How on earth can you call a sparrow a goose?" asked the annoyed Kazi.

"I say a goose is a goose and if your servant brought a goose, then this is the goose," insisted the lady.

The lady's father and brothers lived the next door. The agitated Kazi went out in a huff and banged on his father-in-law's door. When the gentleman opened the door, he dragged him with him, saying, "Come and see what a brazenfaced liar your daughter is! She calls a sparrow a goose!"

By the time the surprised old



man reached the dining table, the lady had changed the sparrow for the stuffed goose!

"Why, my son, this is an excellent goose!" observed the old man. "What makes you think it was a sparrow?"

The Kazi too had a second look at it and knew it to be a goose. He looked apologetic. "I'm so sorry," he said, "I never knew that I could make such a blunder," he murmured apologetically.

"Never mind, son, we all make mistakes at times," observed the old man. The Kazi went to see him off at the doorstep.



The lady replaced the goose with the sparrow.

The Kazi smiled and sat down for dinner. But the moment his eyes fell on the dish, his smile disappeared.

"My God, but this no doubt is a sparrow!" he yelled. Then he jumped and ran towards the door to call his father-in-law back. Swiftly the lady changed the sparrow for the goose.

The old man had not entered his house when he heard the Kazi's call. He returned. Gasping for breath, the Kazi ushered him into his dining room.

"On another look, sir, you cannot mistake it for a goose!"

asserted the Kazi.

But when they looked closely, what they saw was a goose!

The old man looked at his son-in-law with some suspicion. "My son, I wonder what has come over you! I shudder to think what the people will say when they hear that their chief judge cannot judge between a sparrow and a goose!" he said.

The Kazi scratched his head and stood stammering.

The old man headed towards the door. The Kazi followed him and stuttered out, "Well, father, I'm sorry..."

By then the goose had given way to the sparrow.

"Stop, father!" shrieked the Kazi, "Have another look!"

"I've had enough look!" shouted back the old man. "You continue to look at it!"

The shout had attracted the three brothers of the lady. They rushed in. As the door banged open, the Kazi looked in that direction. Swiftly the lady took away the sparrow and put the goose in its place.

"Welcome, brothers," said the Kazi. "Come here and tell me if this can ever be called a goose!"

The young men came near the table and looked at the

dish.

"What's this if not a goose? How on earth a wise man like you make an issue out of a fine stuffed goose?" demanded the brothers-in-law.

"Indeed!" the Kazi gulped down his bewilderment.

"Eat it quietly and go to bed," said the three young men. "And take a week off. You are trying too many cases every day. Now, don't turn into a mental case yourself!"

The three brothers were leaving. The Kazi blinked at them. The lady changed the goose into the sparrow.

"For heaven's sake, brothers, come back and see!" hollered the Kazi, kicking on the floor.

The young men stopped. They did not come to look at the dish, but looked at their father and their sister meaningfully. Then, all on a sudden, they took hold of the Kazi. The Kazi struggled to free himself.

But the eldest brother-in-law twisted the Kazi's hands and kept them in his iron grip. The second brother-in-law kept his legs under control. The youngest one clamped his palms on his mouth so that he could not shriek. The old man followed



them as they carried the Kazi into a solitary room and threw him on the floor and locked the door.

The Kazi could hear the young men asking their father, "Must we inform the sultan about the sudden madness of our brother-in-law?"

The Kazi could not hear what his father-in-law said.

He sat bewildered for a long time. Then he wept.

In the small hours, the next day, the door opened. It was his wife who entered. He cast a blank look at her.

She smiled and said, "Come, you must be hungry. The

stuffed goose is waiting for you!"

She quietly led him to the dining table.

"But it is really a goose this time!" exclaimed the Kazi.

"Naturally, a goose is a goose!" commented the lady.

"But did I not see it as a sparrow?"

"What you saw as a sparrow was a sparrow!" said the lady.

"But..." The Kazi could not speak.

"It was my mischief that confused you!" confessed the lady with a twinkle. Then, after giving out how she had confused him, she said, "This is just to cure you of your wrong ideas. You have now seen how

a woman can make as sensible a man as the Kazi appear mad to the world! Hence, you should not be prejudiced about all those husbands who complain against their wives. Just as there are good men and bad men, there are also good women and bad women. A judge must judge properly!"

In the morning the Kazi called the man whom he had fined. He reopened his case with a clean mind.

At night the Kazi's wife invited her father and brothers to dinner and told them what she had done and for what reason. They had a hearty laugh. Only the Kazi laughed with restraint.



THUS WAS THE WELL DUG WELL!

The landlord of Chitrapur was an arch-miser. He would do nothing for others' benefit. Whenever he spent any money, it was to serve his own interest or to receive some applause from the public.

His son, however, was different. He began digging a well in the village because the villagers were suffering much for dirth of drinking water. He found no water even though he dug quite deep. He knew that water will be hit if the well was made deeper. But he had no means to proceed further in the work.

At night he poured a jugful of oil in the well. Next day, when the landlord heard that the raw earth in the well exuded the smell of oil, he at once employed twenty hands for further digging, hopeful of striking an oil-well!

No oil was found, but plenty of water sprang out. The problem of the poor people was solved!





*New Tales of King Vikram,
and the Vampire*

THE KING AND THE BANDIT

Dark was the night and fearful the atmosphere. Lashing gusts of wind were accompanied by intermittent showers. Flashes of lightning revealed weird faces. Eerie laughter got mixed up with the moaning of jackals.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the old tree again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began walking through the desolate cremation ground, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King! I do not know whether it is in the service of some good people or for the sake of some unworthy fellows that you are taking such pains. We know of kings who have even patronised bad characters. Let me give you the example of King Chandrasen. Listen to the story. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: King Chandrasen ruled over a kingdom which was famous for its trade and commerce. In the

capital lived a number of prosperous merchants. They kept the king pleased by heaping gifts on him.

Days passed smoothly until a dakoo proved a menace for the trading community. He burgled the houses of the merchants one after another quite systematically.

The king appointed many special officers to track down the dakoo. But all they could report to him was that the dakoo distributed his loot among the poor of the land regularly. It was rather surprising that even those who were benefited by the dakoo's benevolence did not know who he was.

The reason for the king's failure to capture the dakoo was simple. The officers were under the impression that the dakoo who plundered the rich must be leading a luxurious life. They also surmised that he must be having a number of followers. They looked for him with such signs in view.

But the facts were different. The dakoo, whose name was Gangaram, was a poor man and he liked to remain poor. He gave away everything to the needy. Secondly, he had no



assistant. There was no second man to know what he did.

One day the merchants met the king in a delegation and proposed that the king declare a reward for the capture of the dakoo. "Let it be a handsome amount, say, a lakh of rupees, so that the dakoo's own lieutenants might feel tempted to betray him or the common people might feel the incentive to risk their lives to capture him," they said.

"I can give that much money," said a merchant.

"Well, any of us can give that!" said a few more.

The king accepted the sugges-



tion and an announcement was made duly.

Gangaram, the dakoo, was one day coming out of a forest when he saw a young man lying wounded just outside the forest. He nursed the traveller who had been mauled by a leopard. He carried the traveller home and bade him take rest.

The traveller, Prakash, became a friend of Gangaram. He soon observed that Gangaram went out of home regularly at night. He expressed his curiosity before his kind host.

It was surprising that Gangaram trusted Prakash entirely. He confessed to his being the

dakoo, after Prakash had promised that he will keep his knowledge a secret.

Prakash now suffered from a conflict. No doubt, he felt grateful towards Gangaram. But for Gangaram, he would have perhaps died on the roadside. At the same time the promise of one lakh of rupees as reward was too big a temptation to be resisted.

At last the temptation gained the upper hand.

After Gangaram went out at night, he hurried to the palace and sought an urgent meeting with the king. He promised to lure Gangaram right to the gateway of the palace the next day, in the afternoon.

Then he was back at Gangaram's hut. In the morning he proposed that both visit the town. Gangaram agreed.

They reached the town at noon. They relaxed in a park and shared their lunch. A dog, obviously hungry, loitered around them looking wistfully at their food. Prakash was about to hurl a stone at it. But Gangaram stopped him and gave the dog a piece of bread.

Thereafter Prakash led Gangaram towards the palace. The dog followed them. On the

balcony stood the king himself. Near the gate were some guards. Prakash expected them to pounce upon Gangaram. But minutes passed. Gangaram innocently began moving away. Prakash shouted, "My lord, this is the dakoo. Why don't you capture him?"

Gangaram understood his guest's treachery. His hand went to his sword. But before that Prakash had brought out a dagger which he threw at Gangaram. Gangaram would have been killed, but the dog which had been fed by him jumped up as if to receive the thrust of the dagger. It died.

By then Gangaram had made up his mind. He drove his sword into Prakash, shouting out, "You crooked fellow! This dog gave its life for me because I had given it a piece of bread. But I had saved your life and this is what was in your mind!"

Prakash fell dead. Instantly the king gave the signal for his guards to capture Gangaram.

The king spent a long time with Gangaram in his private audience chamber. Then he called all the leading merchants. Presenting Gangaram to them, he said, "This gentleman was working as my representative.



So far as the dakoo menace is concerned, we both have succeeded in putting an end to it. Each one of you were ready to give a lakh of rupees. Now I want you to give a lakh each to this representative of mine."

The vampire paused and then demanded, "O King, what is the significance of the king not punishing the dakoo and introducing him as his representative? Why did he not disclose to the merchants Gangaram's identity as the dakoo? Why did he ask the merchants to pay him a lakh each? How is it that the king did not make his guards capture Gangaram as soon as

he appeared before the palace? Answer my questions, O King, if you can. If you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answers, your head would roll off your shoulders!"

Answered King Vikram forthwith: "The king had already an impression that Gangaram was no ordinary dakoo, for, he distributed his loot among the poor. In course of his private discussion with the dakoo, he must have felt convinced that by taking care of the poor, Gangaram was doing what the king himself ought to have done. That is why he described Gangaram as his representative. He did not disclose Gangaram's identity as a dakoo because that was not Gangaram's true identity. Gangaram was a friend of the poor. Secondly, the king must have decided to use Gan-

garam's services as his minister. It would be awkward to present him first as a dakoo and then to appoint him a minister.

"He wanted the merchants to pay a lakh each because they were willing to spend that much if the menace ended. Secondly, he wanted Gangaram to use the money for the needy.

"The king did not order his guards to pounce upon Gangaram immediately because he wanted to be sure what the relation between the two was. Gangaram, of course, could not have escaped. The guards were hiding all around him. The delay served a purpose. The treacherous Prakash got his due!"

No sooner had King Vikram finished replying than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.



TANTIA TOPE

"Come together, all the patriots, let us drive the foreigners away from our soil. They came as traders. Now they are eager to rule us. Is it not a disgrace for this ancient country which had seen so many great kings, great rulers, to be ruled by a handful of foreign traders?"

The young man, riding a horse, was passing through a town. He had stopped for a while to talk to a crowd of curious people.

But when he resumed his journey, a part of the crowd began to follow him. They were all able-bodied young men.

"We shall be with you as your soldiers, willing to die for the country," they declared.

The speaker hailed their decision and led them on.

From town to town he moved. Wherever he went he found new supporters. He raised a large army. He taught his soldiers discipline and the methods of both open warfare and guerilla warfare.

He was Tantia Tope, the famous General of the army of Nana Sahib.

Tope was born at Gola, in Maharashtra, in 1814. He had joined Nana Sahib as his clerk,





but soon proved himself a brilliant soldier.

When the Sepoy Mutiny broke out and Nana Sahib declared war against the British, Tope's talent in organising an army and his capacity for leadership surprised all—even his enemy.

Once, commanding a 20,000 strong army, he chased a British regiment into the city of Kanpur. For days together the regiment remained virtually his prisoners in the city. Whenever they tried to escape, Tope's soldiers fired upon them. Windham, the British commander, felt miserable. Time and again

he tried to sneak out, but he was chased back.

It was, however, Windham's good luck that Sir Colin Campbell, the Commander-in-Chief of the British in India, appeared there suddenly, bringing his highly efficient army. Tope's calculation had gone slightly wrong. He did not expect Campbell to arrive there so soon.

A fierce battle ensued. Tope's soldiers were attacked from two sides. From the city Windham's men, emboldened at Campbell's arrival, attacked Tope with redoubled vigour. From outside Campbell charged with fury. He was eagerly looking forward to capture Tope.

But Campbell could not do that. Tope and his soldiers escaped.

Campbell was disappointed. Tope's area of actions was wide. He harassed the British soldiers at several places in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. He inflicted crushing defeats on the enemy at Charkhari and Gwalior and recaptured the towns from them.

But Tope realised that if the enemy had to be driven out of the whole of India once for all, the rajas of the country must

join hands. They must put their men and resources together to fight the powerful British.

He made his master, Nana Sahib, write a general appeal to the rulers of India. With the appeal he began meeting them personally.

But this patriot thought ahead of his time. All the rulers were not patriotic. In fact, some of them were willing to help the British for paltry gains.

The enemy got the intelligence of Tope's move. They promised rewards and favours to some of the rulers if any of them would betray Tope to them, when he came to meet them with Nana Sahib's appeal.

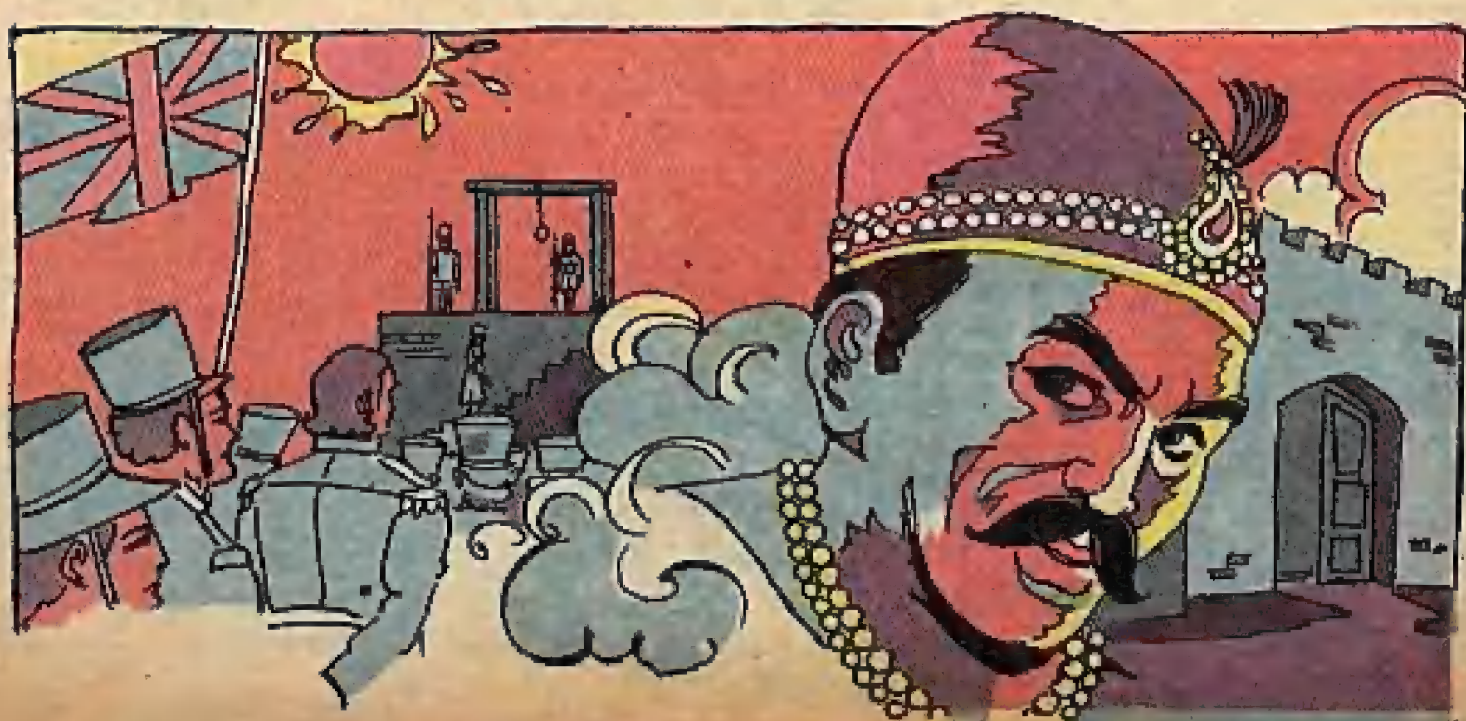
One ruler whom Tope took to be his friend, fell a prey to the temptation. Tope camped in

Paron forest and sent word to the ruler, Man Singh of Narwar. Man Singh, in many words, praised Tope and promised to meet him soon.

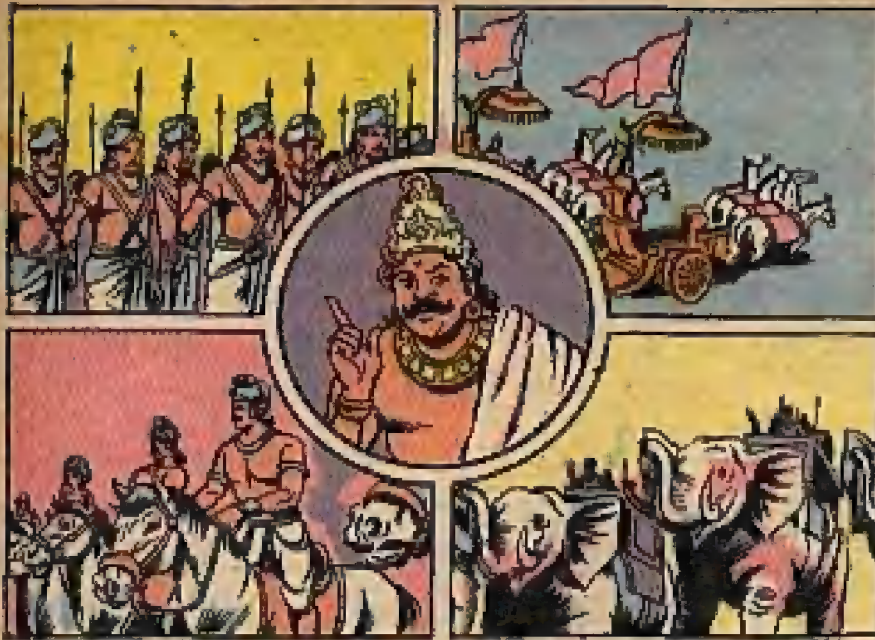
Tope was moved. He was tired and he went to sleep.

But, O treachery! Man Singh alerted the British. The enemy trooped in while the trusting patriot was asleep and captured him. He was tried by a military court. Tope rightly defied the court declaring that he had never been a British subject. The British had no right to try him.

But the enemy were eager to finish him. They had failed to kill him in open battle. Now they hanged him gleefully on 18 April 1859.

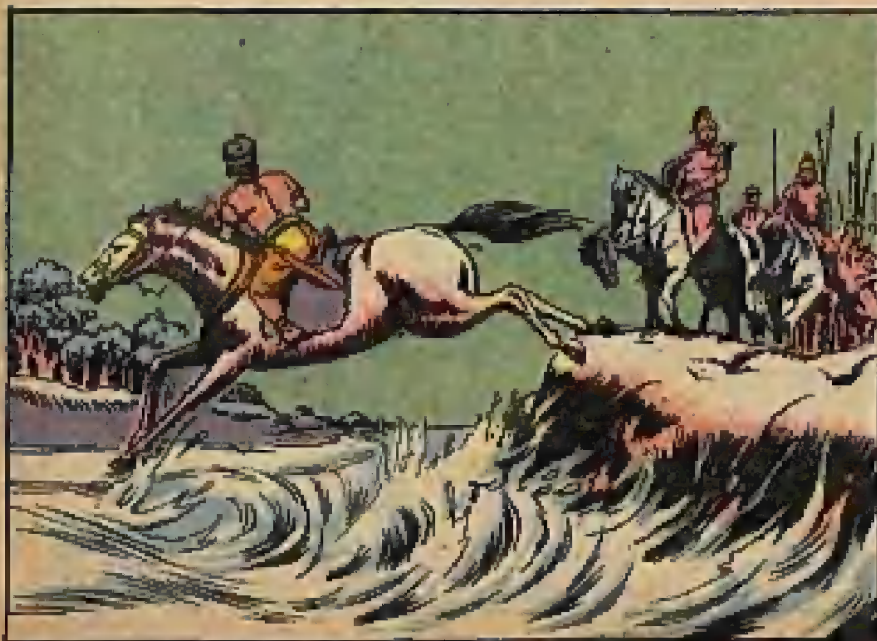
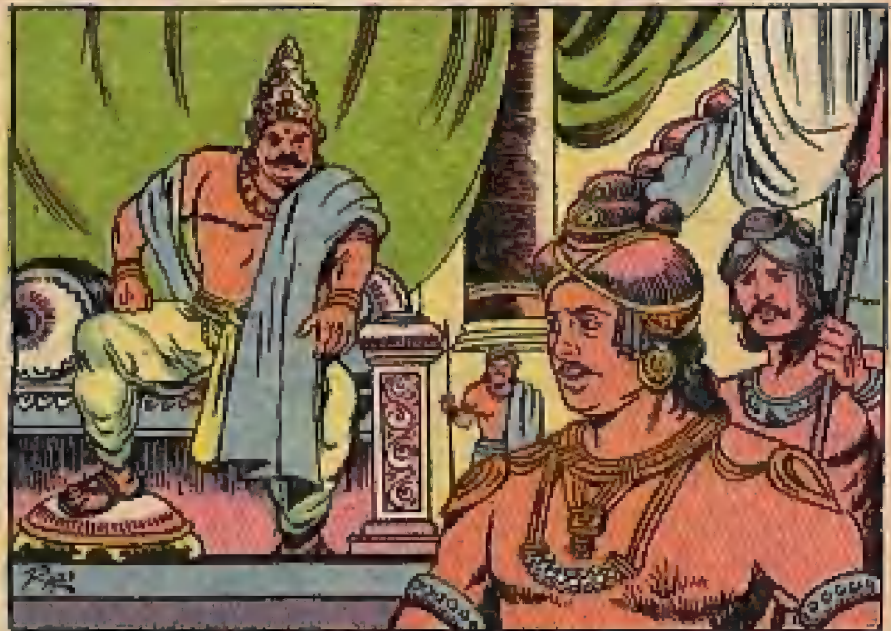


CHANDRAGUPTA AND CHANAKYA



This was in the 4th century B.C. The powerful Nanda dynasty, founded by Mahapadmananda, ruled Magadha. He commanded a large army, with 20,000 cavalry, 200,000 infantry, 2,000 chariots, and 3,000 elephants.

Mahapadmananda had eight sons. They ruled the kingdom one after another. The last of them, Dhanananda, once got angry with one of his young officers and ordered for his execution.



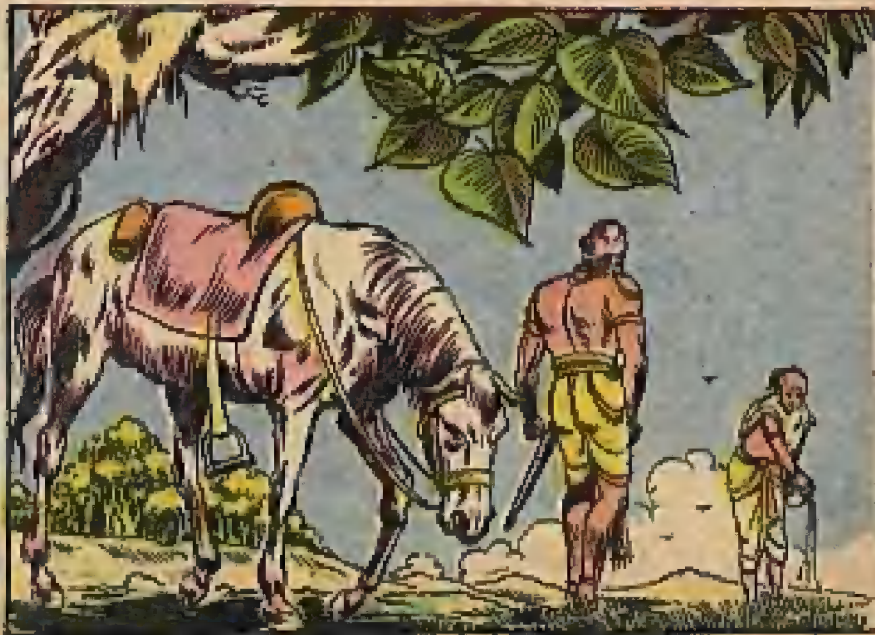
But, the young man, Chandragupta, ran away from the court and jumping onto his horse, galloped away at great speed. The king's soldiers pursued him, but in vain. The young man crossed a river at one leap.

That was the time when the Macedonian Prince, Alexander the Great, had invaded India. He intended to conquer Magadha and he advanced upon it. But his army refused to cross the river Beas, afraid of the power of the Nandas.



Out of curiosity, Chandragupta was following the Greeks. He laughed when he saw the dilemma faced by the Greek hero. Annoyed Alexander ordered his men to catch the young man. But he gave the Greeks the slip.

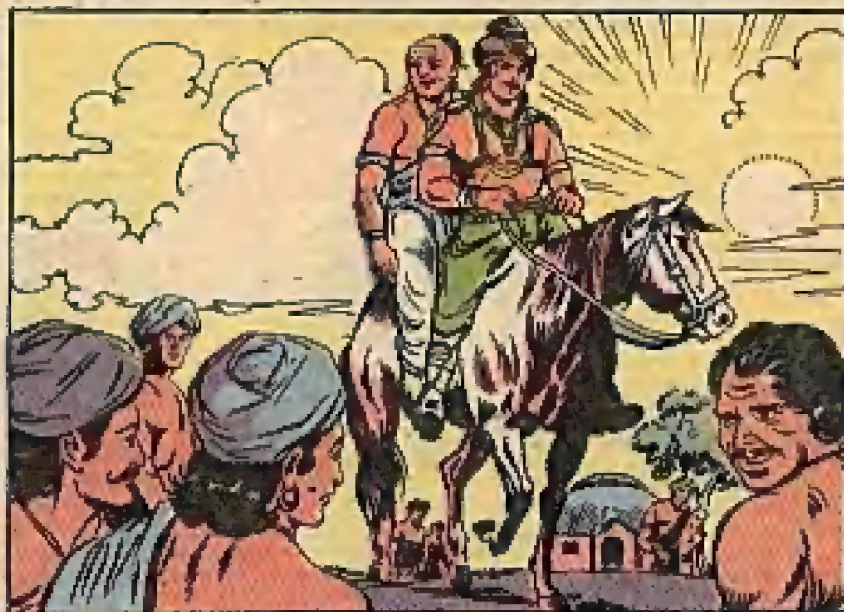
With two formidable enemies looking for him, Chandragupta had to hide in the Vindhya forest. There, as the legend goes, he saw a Brahmin pouring some juice at the roots of some sharp-edged grass.





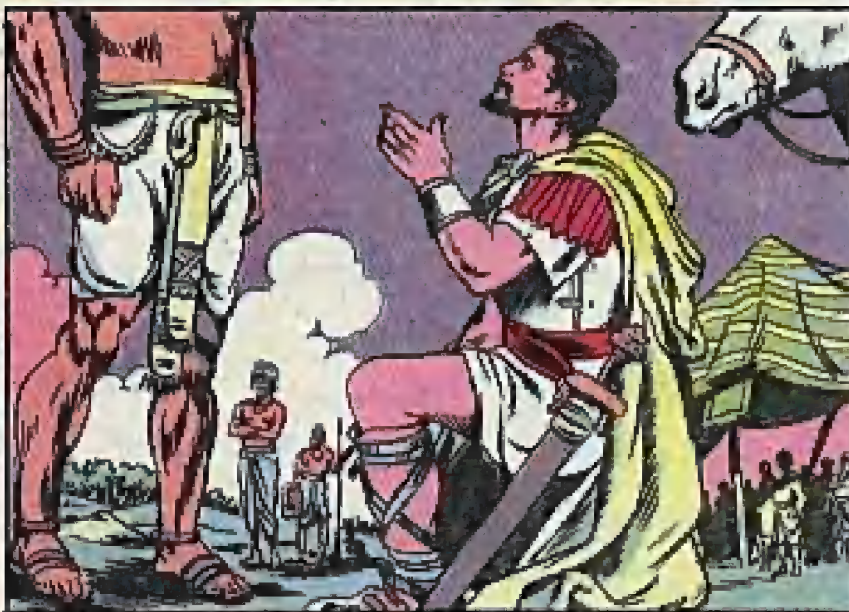
"What are you doing?" queried Chandragupta. The Brahmin replied that he was pouring sugarcane juice at the roots of those grass because one of their shoots pricked him. The juice will attract ants who will eat up the roots of those grass!

Chandragupta felt amazed at the determination, though verging on madness, of the Brahmin whose name was Chanakya. Chanakya too had been insulted by the Nanda King and was determined to take revenge. Both became friends and went out to raise an army.



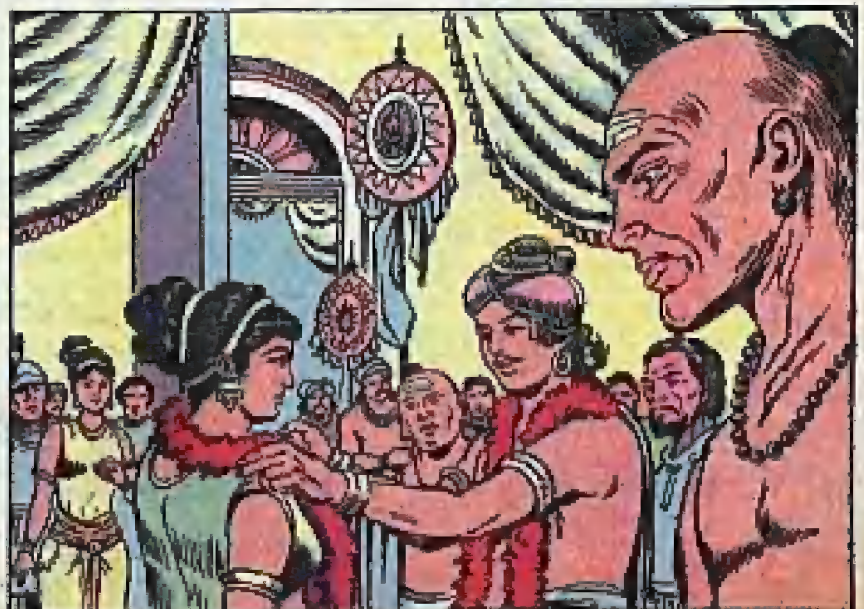
Soon Alexander died. The Nanda King was very unpopular. Taking advantage of the situation, Chandragupta, with his small army, fought bravely against the Greeks as well as the Nanda King. He succeeded in defeating both.

The Nanda dynasty ended. In 322 B.C. Chandragupta founded the Maurya dynasty, so called after the name of his mother, Mura. He made Pataliputra, where the modern Patna stands, his capital. It became a great city.



One of the generals of the late Alexander, Seleucos, tried to recapture a portion of the Indian territory his master had conquered. But Chandragupta gave him a fierce battle. Seleucos made truce and sent an ambassador, named Megasthenes, to the Maurya court.

Seleucos also gave his daughter in marriage to Chandragupta. Thus was an Indian prince married to a Greek bride. Chandragupta expanded his empire and ruled till the end of the 3rd century B.C.





In 280 B.C. was completed the great Pharos, or lighthouse, that was to guide ships to the port of Alexandria. Standing for all to see on a little island just outside the harbour, it looked unbelievably tall, with its golden statue of Alexander the Great gleaming in the sun.

MAN-MADE MARVELS

WORLD'S FIRST LIGHT HOUSE

The monument called Pharos at Alexandria was one of the Seven Wonders of the World, as well as the fore-runner of the modern light-houses.

It was a triumph, yet the Pharos posed a tricky problem for its architect Sostratus. Like most artists, he had a natural desire to put his own name to his work, but according to custom the only name the light-house could bear was that of the man who had ordered it to be built. In this case, the man was no less a person than King Ptolemy II of Egypt.

For a long time the architect wondered what to do. To ignore the king was unthinkable. Ptolemy was an extravagant ruler who poured out vast sums of money in order to maintain a magnificent court, but he was also a patron of the arts and a man of tremendous scientific curiosity. Strange animals were brought from all over the known world for him to see. He was always adding books to

Alexandria's famous library.

Finally, Sostratus hit on a solution. In the hard stone at the base of the Pharos, he cut his own name deeply. Then he covered the words with mortar in which he etched the royal inscription that gave full credit to Ptolemy. After twenty years or so, the soft mortar would crumble away, the king's name would vanish with it and that of the builder would remain down the centuries for all the world to see. By the 6th century the Pharos was acknowledged as one of the Wonders of the World.

A Permanent Bonfire

Was the great Pharos really as impressive as all that? Almost certainly it was. It was undoubtedly well made, because it lasted until well into the 12th century, when it was finally shaken down by an earthquake. Its remains were used by a local sultan as raw material for a fort.

Thanks to the Arab historian, Ibn al-Shaikh, we have a fair idea of what the great building looked like. It seems to have been constructed in three sections, the lower one being a square-based, flattened pyramid which supported an octagonal

middle section and finally a circular tower that contained the light.

Just what kind of light was used is not recorded, but it was probably a large bonfire reached by a sloping ramp. Reports as to how far the light reached vary from 150 kilometres to 50. The curvature of the earth rules out the larger figure, but even 50 kilometres is impressive enough, and we have to accept that Sostratus's building was an epic achievement, almost two thousand years ahead of its time. Even the great builders did little more than raise a number of functional beacon towers throughout their empire in order to warn ships of dangerous coastlines. It was Edward the Black Prince that built a lighthouse—the second lighthouse in history.

The site of the Black Prince's lighthouse was the tiny island of Cordouan, a 900-metre long strip of rock off Bordeaux. This rock was submerged at high tide and had long been a menace to shipping. Things had got so bad that merchants were threatening to boycott the port unless something was done to mark the danger spot, while the owners of the local vineyards

were becoming worried in case this should harm the profitable wine trade.

The Black Prince's solution was to build a 14-metre high beacon on the rock. He found the ideal lighthouse-keeper in the person of a religious hermit, who lived on a ledge of rock that remained clear of the water and who was authorized to levy a charge of four groats (about thirty paise) on ships passing the light. Unfortunately the post was not much sought after, for when the hermit died the beacon fell into disuse. It was not until 1584 that another lighthouse was erected on the same spot, and it could hardly have been more different from that established by the Black Prince.

Beauty with Utility

The idea of elaborate architecture for a lighthouse seems strange to us today, but even until a century ago the taste was different. When Henry Winstanley built the first lighthouse on the Eddystone rocks off the Cornish coast, it contained what he described as "a very fine bedchamber, richly gilded and painted" and the design for the tower included six graceful candle-sticks that were secured to the outside of



The functional modern lighthouse at Alexandria is a far cry from the splendid and historic Pharos of Sostratus.

the lantern. Winstanley admitted that these were only for decoration, but made a note that they might prove useful if someone wanted to lean a ladder on them.

For all its peculiarities, Winstanley's lighthouse gave excellent service for five years before being destroyed in a great storm. Like all wave-swept lighthouses it had to face tremendous natural forces, and men began to think that however strongly they built, and however thick the masonry they used, the sea would always win in the end. After all, how could blocks of stone be cemented together successfully, when the

sea would rise with the tide and wash the cement away before it could harden?

Fifty years after the collapse of Winstanley's lighthouse, an engineer named John Smeaton was faced with the problem of how to build a replacement. Walking in London one day, he chanced to notice that the stones that made up the pavement under his feet were kept in place by dove-tailing. Smeaton had never realised that stone, as well as wood, could be securely jointed in this way.

Smeaton built his lighthouse of dovetailed stone blocks, and it was replaced in the late 19th century, proving for all time that a wave-swept lighthouse was a practical proposition. The present Eddystone lighthouse rises up beside the stump of Smeaton's structure, a slender marvel of engineering, standing 40 metres high. And yet according to the careful notes of the 12th century Arab historian, the great Pharos at Alexandria was no less than 135 metres high, more than three times taller than the present Eddystone light. No wonder Sostratus's masterpiece is remembered as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

TWO WISE MINISTERS !

"Can't we conquer the neighbouring kingdom of Jaigarh, since the king seems to be quite unintelligent?" asked King Kamdev of Sudhapur.

"That depends, my lord, on how intelligent the minister of Jaigarh is," replied Kamdev's minister.

The minister then sent an emissary to Jaigarh. The emissary told the king of Jaigarh, "My king requests you to send a man who lives on death and another who lives on life!"

The minister of Jaigarh at once sent a priest and a physician with the emissary.

Upon their arrival, Kamdev's minister observed, "This priest's work is to perform funeral rites for the dead. He lives on others' death. The physician lives by ensuring healthy life for others. The minister of Jaigarh is intelligent. We are not likely to win a battle easily!"

King Kamdev gave up the idea of an invasion.





DESTINATION DESERT

This happened during the time of Kaniska.

Kaniska then ruled a large territory in Northern India. His capital was Purushpur. He was so generous that his subjects looked upon him as a god.

Undoubtedly Kaniska was the greatest hero of his time. He could defeat any king with whom he fought a battle. Many a king who had never faced him in a battle owed allegiance to him out of fear. They sent a token tax or a gift to him every year.

One such king was the ruler of Kanyakubja. Once, on the occasion of Kaniska's birthday, he sent him the gift of a piece of silk.

Kaniska liked the silk very much. He called his tailor and asked him to make a shirt out

of the cloth. The tailor promised to do it in a week.

But the tailor failed to report even after a fortnight. Had he fallen sick? The king, upon inquiry, learnt that he had been moving about as hale and hearty as ever.

The king got annoyed. The tailor was summoned and asked how he dared to neglect his duty.

"My lord, it is out of sheer fear that I have not reported to you. The piece of silk you gave me bears the mark of a pair of shoes. However carefully I try, I cannot avoid the mark appearing on the back of the shirt. How can I show such a shirt to you, my lord?" asked the tailor.

Kaniska grew furious. He realised that it is with a mind



to insult him that the King of Kanyakubja had sent him the cloth. He resolved to conquer Kanyakubja and punish the king. He ordered his ministers and generals to get ready for the expedition.

The King of Kanyakubja had a spy at Purushpur. Upon learning about the intended invasion of his country, the spy ran to his king and gave him the news.

The King of Kanyakubja grew extremely worried. He knew that it will be impossible for his army to resist Kaniska's force. He called his prime minister and sought his advice.

"My lord, I had warned you against sending the gift, hadn't I?" asked the prime minister.

"You had. It was foolish of me to disregard your warning. It is true that I intended insulting the proud Kaniska. But I never thought that the consequence will be so severe!" explained the king.

The prime minister stood pensive for long. He then said gravely, "Please do as I say. Don't ask me any question about the action I propose. Please cut off one of my arms. It is only that way that we can protect our land."

Despite his unwillingness, the king had to do as the prime minister wanted. He had to ask his executioner to cut off an arm of the old man.

In a fortnight Kaniska reached the frontier of Kanyakubja. The prime minister advanced to meet him. Kaniska who had already been informed of the minister's approach, came out of his camp.

"Hello, old man, how did you lose your arm?" asked Kaniska.

"O Mighty King, you are the cause of my suffering. My king awarded this punishment to me because I protested against the

humiliating gift he sent you," said the prime minister of Kanyakubja.

"I see. Your king must pay the price for insulting me and harming you. I am going to conquer his land and take him prisoner. I shall then punish the audacious king in consultation with you," said Kaniska.

"Thanks. But it is not going to be easy for you to locate my king. He has fled the country, scared at your approach," informed the prime minister.

"Don't you know where he is hiding?" asked Kaniska.

"I know," replied the prime minister, lowering his voice.

"In that case can you not show us the way to his hiding place?" asked Kaniska.

"I can. There are two ways leading to that place. One is long, but safe. We have to spend one and half months to reach our destination. The other way is shorter, but it passes through a desert. In ten days we can reach our destination, but we won't get even a drop of water to drink during that period," said the prime minister.

"Is there no chance of your king returning early?" asked Kaniska.

"How can he return knowing



fully well that the step will ruin him?" Observed the prime minister.

"Hm!" Kaniska remained thoughtful for a moment. "We cannot afford to spend one and half months in going to get hold of him. Better we take the shorter route," he said. He then ordered his people to collect food and drinking water enough to last twelve days.

They marched through the desert. Ten days passed. But they saw no sign of the end of the desert.

Kaniska and his army were growing impatient. They used the little food and the water



to return to the other end of the desert. I need hardly say that you won't be able to live for more than two or three days in the present condition! It is to save my king and my land from your fury that I played treachery with you. You may now behead me."

Kaniska remained speechless for some time. Then he smiled and said, "Old man, I could have become a much greater emperor had I a minister as faithful, as self-denying and as courageous as yourself. However, your plan is not going to succeed."

Kaniska brought out a magic trident. He roamed about for an hour and then stopped at a certain place. He felt that once there was a lake there. He made a thrust with the trident. Water sprang out instantly.

His soldiers gave out shouts of joy. Soon a small lake was formed and all quenched their thirst.

"We have still some hidden stock of dry food. I can bring forth water once a day in this process: So, you see, we are not going to perish. We shall return to Kanyakubja and wreck our vengeance on your land.

that they carried as miserly as possible. But, by the sixteenth day, no water was left with them. They looked miserable.

"What is the matter, old man? Why don't we reach our destination?" Kaniska demanded of the prime minister.

The old man laughed. "My lord, this desert is your destination! You made the greatest blunder of your life by vesting your confidence in me. You and your army are now destined to be destroyed. Even if you continue to advance, you will not see any human habitation before a fortnight. The same length of time will be required



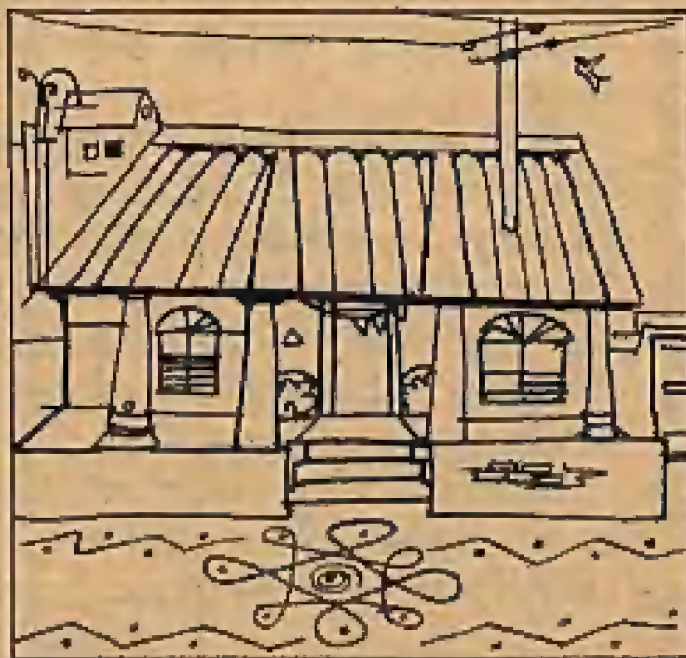
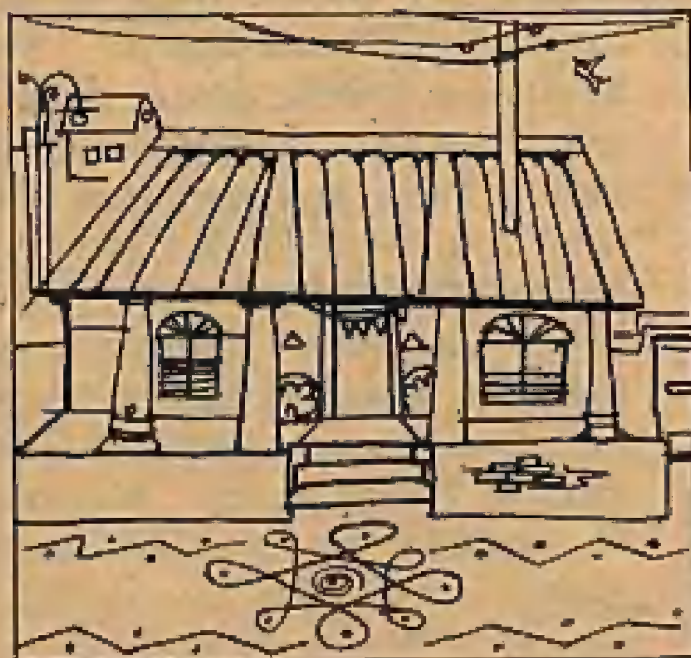
However, I am impressed with you. I am willing to bestow upon you any reward you desire to have," said Kaniska.

"My lord, you are adored by all for your goodness and greatness. Let me put these qualities of yours to test. You have offered me a reward. Now, this

is what I beg of you: pardon the impudence of my king and spare our land," said the old minister.

Kaniska nodded assent. Soon he ordered his soldiers to head towards Purushpur. He sent the old minister home with escorts.

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



Ben-hur, a novel by the American novelist Lew Wallace (1827-1909) was published exactly a century ago—in 1880.

That was in A.D. 1st century. The young Ben-Hur and his sister were standing on their balcony in Jerusalem when the Roman soldiers were passing by. Suddenly a tile gave away and fell on the head of Gratus, a very important Roman Officer.

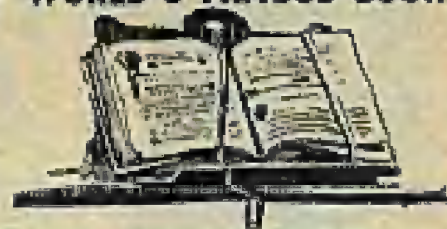
Gratus got toppled off his horse. The Romans were not prepared to understand that it was only an accident. They arrested all the members of Ben-Hur's family. His house was sold.

Ben-Hur, separated from the others, was led to a ship to work as a slave. On the way, when the guards who led him were relaxing and he lay totally exhausted, a stranger gave him water.

But, was he really a stranger? Ben-Hur felt something extremely ennobling about him. Little did he know that the stranger was none other than the one who was to become celebrated as Jesus Christ.

Ben-Hur was made to work as an oarsman in a ship. An influential Roman named Arrius

STORY OF WORLD'S FAMOUS BOOKS



BEN-HUR

who was in the ship took a liking for him. There occurred a shipwreck. Arrius was saved from drowning by Ben-Hur. The grateful old man got Ben-Hur free and adopted him as his son. After the old man's death, Ben-Hur inherited his property.

In the port-city, Antioch, Ben-Hur met Simonides who was the manager of the estates of Ben-Hur's father. Esther, the daughter of Simonides, loved Ben-Hur.

One day, on the road, a man driving a horse-chariot was about to knock down an old man and his daughter. Ben-Hur risked jumping into the road and with all his strength pushed the chariot away. The driver of the chariot was Messala, who had been a friend and then an adversary of Ben-Hur in earlier days. Messala, of course, did not recognise Ben-Hur and was discourteous

towards him.

Soon there was to be a chariot-race. The arrogant Messala expected to win it. But Ben-Hur appeared on the scene. He was patronised by one Seik Ilderim.

In the exciting race Ben-Hur defeated and wounded Messala.

Messala tried to kill Ben-Hur through his agents. Ben-Hur created the impression that he had been killed. Then he set out in search of his mother and daughter and found them. But they had been smitten with leprosy.

That was the time when the message of Jesus was spreading. The people were also revolting against their Roman masters. Ben-Hur became one of their

leaders.

John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God. When Ben-Hur saw Jesus, he remembered how he had once the luck to receive water from him. Jesus touched Ben-Hur's mother and sister and cured them of their disease.

When Jesus was tried and crucified, Ben-Hur was present. He was greatly influenced by the Son of God.

Ben-Hur married Esther and lived as a wealthy man. But he went to Rome and spent all his wealth in building underground shelters and tombs for the early Christians who were being persecuted by the Romans.

These tombs are still there, famous as catacombs.



A CERTIFICATE WITH A DIFFERENCE

A certain king decided to employ a physician in every village of his kingdom. Those who came with a certificate from any of the well-known teachers of Ayurveda got the job!

Subahu, a ruffian, met a famous teacher and demanded a certificate.

"I don't give a certificate to anyone unless he has studied Ayurveda under me," said the teacher.

Subahu brandished a dagger and threatened to kill him. The teacher wrote out: "Subahu, through years of toil, has qualified himself for the post of a physician."

On reading the certificate, the king said, "Generally the teacher mentions that the candidate has studied for six years, for, that is the length of the course. Why has he left the time vague in your case? Either you were a very bad student or there is some mystery in it."

Subahu tried to slip away. But the king detained him and made an investigation. The truth was known. Subahu was sent to gaol.





THE SAGA OF SHIVA

In the twilight of the creation the gods and the demons were always at loggerheads. The demons proved ruthless and fearless.

Often the demons succeeded in defeating the gods and occupying the heavens. Although the gods won their sphere back after prolonged battles, they could not live their days in peace.

Once, at Vishnu's suggestion, both the sides met. It was proposed that together they churn the Ocean of Milk. The churning was to result in nectar coming out of the ocean. The nectar would make the fighting parties immortal. They could then fight on without any fear of death!

A pole and a rope were needed for the churning. What could serve as a pole for this

great operation? It was decided to set Mount Mandar at the middle of the ocean to serve as the pole. But it was not easy to uproot the mount. Gods and demons, together, failed to do it. They sought the help of Adishesha—the divine serpent—who obliged them.

Mount Mandar was set in the ocean all right, but it was thought that the impact of churning might sink it into the earth. To solve this problem, Vishnu agreed to assume the form of a turtle and hold it on his back.

Now the problem was to find out a suitable string of rope. Vasuki, the serpent-king, was approached. He agreed to serve as the rope.

The question was, who would be at the head and who would be at the tail of Vasuki? The



demons thought it prestigious to be at the head.

The gods too were equally eager to be at the head. But at a hint from Vishnu, they withdrew their demand. The demons were happy.

But soon after the churning began, the demons had to repent for their choice. The forceful pull alternately given by the gods and the demons made Vasuki vomit forth poison. Since the demons were near his mouth, the emission of the poison sickened them.

The poison soon polluted the whole atmosphere. Fire broke out here and there on the earth.

The terrible poison threatened to destroy the creation.

A large number of devotees ran to Kailash and appealed to Shiva to save the earth from the impending doom.

"How can you help them?" Parvati asked Shiva.

"There is only one way to save the situation. I must absorb the destructive poison in myself," said Shiva.

Parvati nodded. She knew that Shiva had the power to do so.

Shiva stood up. With his spiritual power, he pulled all the poison towards himself and swallowed the deadly thing. As a result his throat grew blue. He is since then called *Nilakantha*—the Blue-throated.

Everybody sighed in relief as the earth-atmosphere was cleared of the poisonous clouds.

The churning went on. Out of the ocean emerged Kama-dhenu—the Wish-fulfilling Cow; Uchahshraiva, a powerful horse; Airavata, a charming elephant; Parijata, a wonderful flower, and Urvashi, a nymph.

All these invaluable outcomes were claimed by sages or gods.

Thereafter emerged Goddess Lakshmi whom Vishnu claimed. Along with Lakshmi came out

the moon!

At last came out Dhanvantari, a godly being who carried nectar in a jar. At once the gods and the demons made a dash for the jar. The gods saw that left to themselves it would be impossible for them to keep the nectar out of the demon's reach. They grew panicky. As it is, the demons were fearful enough. Once they become immortal by the virtue of the nectar there was not going to be any end to their menace.

The gods prayed to Vishnu to intervene and avert the crisis.

Suddenly a beautiful damsel appeared on the scene. She

radiated such magnetic charm that all stood amazed, looking agape at her. Both the camps forgot their quarrel.

"If you leave it to me, I shall do justice," said the damsel with a bewitching smile.

Both the camps agreed to let her distribute the nectar.

She made the gods and the demons sit in two separate rows. Then she began by doling out the nectar to the gods. Since the demons had promised not to question her action, they waited. But no nectar remained for them!

It was too late for the demons to realise that the charming





damsel was none other than Vishnu himself!

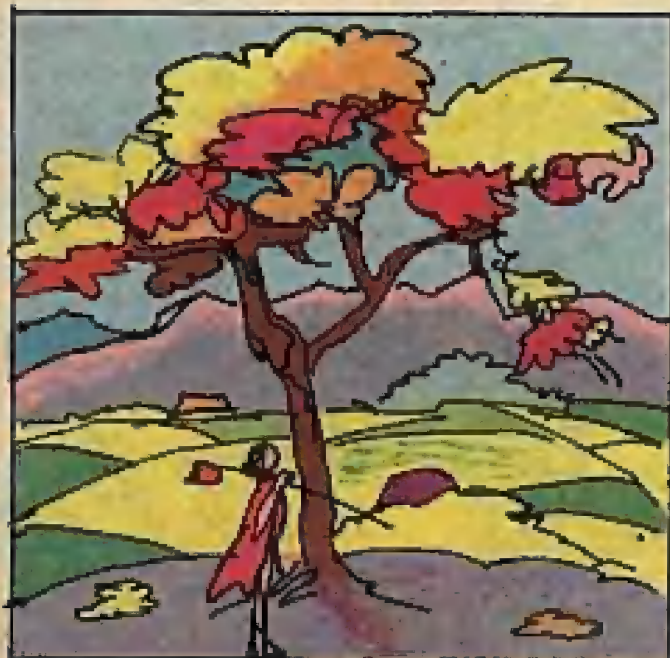
Thus did the gods become immortal.

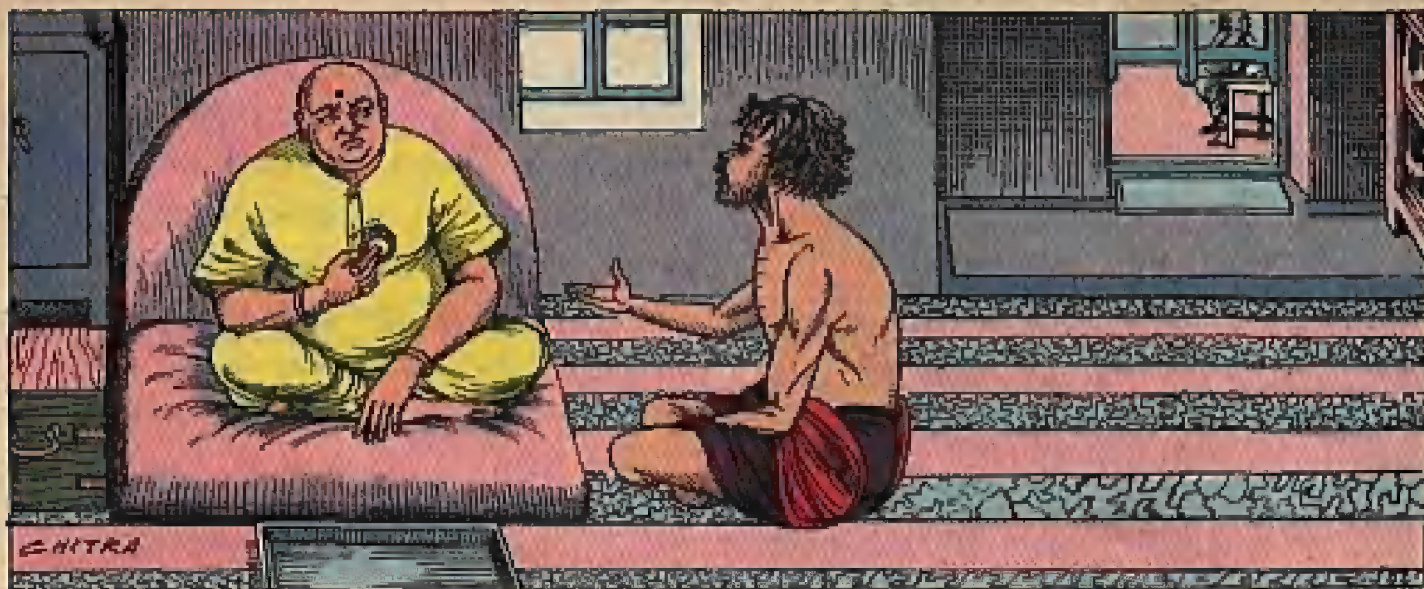
News reached Kailash that Vishnu had assumed the form of a charming young lady. Curious, Shiva came down to have a look at Vishnu's strange

form. He had been accompanied by Parvati and others. But the moment his eyes fell on the charming lady, he forgot everything else and ran forward to have a closer look at her.

The damsel giggled. Only then Shiva remembered who the damsel really was!

WONDER WITH COLOURS





A Gift from the Goddess

In a village between the city and the forest lived Sadhu, a woodcutter.

Often he used to think, "I am so poor that the day I do not work, I starve. My condition ought to change. This forest is the witness to my labours. There must be a deity presiding over the forest. Why does she not take pity on me?"

One morning, while plucking some berries from a bush, Sadhu saw something glittering on the ground, covered by grass though. He parted the grass and saw a fine gold wrist band.

"This must be a gift for me from the goddess of the forest," Sadhu thought as he rejoiced at his find.

He went to the city and showed it to a goldsmith.

"This is a gift for me from the goddess of the forest. Will you like to buy it?" he asked.

At first the goldsmith took Sadhu to be a madcap. "A gift from the goddess?" he laughed. "Go and throw it into the river!" he said, waving his hand in order to dismiss Sadhu. But, his eyes fell on what Sadhu held. At once he understood that he was really having something valuable. He asked Sadhu to take seat and then took the wrist band for a closer look.

The goldsmith examined the Ornament and found it to be studded with a small diamond.



He did not believe in what Sadhu said. "The fellow must have stolen it from some wealthy man's house. Well, why not I win it away from him?" he asked himself. But to Sadhu he said, "I do not have enough money to buy such a costly thing today. If you bring it to me tomorrow, I shall be happy to have it at the right price."

"Very good, sir, I can certainly wait!" said Sadhu and he went away. The goldsmith set a servant to follow him to locate his house.

In the afternoon the goldsmith went to the king and said, "My lord, a poor man named

Sadhu has stolen away a precious gold wrist band from my shop. I know where he lives. If you get him arrested now and have his hut searched, the stolen property may be recovered."

The king sent two sepoy's to search Sadhu's house and to arrest him.

The sepoy's faced no difficulty in getting hold of Sadhu. They were not required to search his house. Asked about the band, Sadhu immediately brought it out of his old bag.

Sadhu was led to the king's court. The king took the wrist band and had a close look at it. There flashed a glitter in his eyes.

"How did you dare to steal it from this honest man's shop?" the king demanded, fixing a stern gaze on Sadhu.

"Why do you ask me such a question, my lord? Did I not tell the goldsmith that the goddess of the forest made a gift of it to me?" asked Sadhu.

"What do you mean?" demanded the king.

"I found it lying under a bush. Why should it lie there and why should I chance to see it unless the goddess of the forest wished me to get it? She saw me toiling daily. She must

have taken pity on me!" said Sadhu.

The woodcutter's simplicity charmed the king.

But looking at the goldsmith he said, "This wicked woodcutter has invented a tale, what do you say?"

"You have got it right, my lord," exclaimed the goldsmith.

"Let us show him that he cannot hoodwink us. Go and fetch the other wrist band of the pair," the king directed the goldsmith.

The goldsmith looked nervous. "My lord," he stammered out, "the other band of the pair had been stolen earlier!"

"In that case, I must be the thief!" said the king, "for that one is with me!"

The king's statement surprised and amused all.

Explained the king, "On a hunting expedition into the forest, I took out my wrist band and put them in my pocket. Later I found that one was missing. It must have slipped down. The area where the woodcutter says he found it was the very area where I had lost it!"

The goldsmith, under the severe gaze of the whole court, looked pale as a ghost.

"Five years for his first lie, five years for being cruel towards as innocent a man as Sadhu, and two years for his second lie that the other wrist band too had been stolen!" announced the king, meaning the length of time the goldsmith was to pass in the prison.

The king then gave Sadhu the exact value of the wrist band.



HOW TO TEST AN ARMOUR

A craftsman made his earning by making armours for soldiers.

Once he made a strong armour and carried it to a king. He hoped to receive a handsome price for it.

"Let me see how strong your armour is," said the king. He put the armour around a stone and beat it with an iron hammer. It cracked.

The craftsman returned home disappointed. When his son, who was a soldier, heard about it, he carried another armour, also made by his father, to the king and proposed to sell it to him.

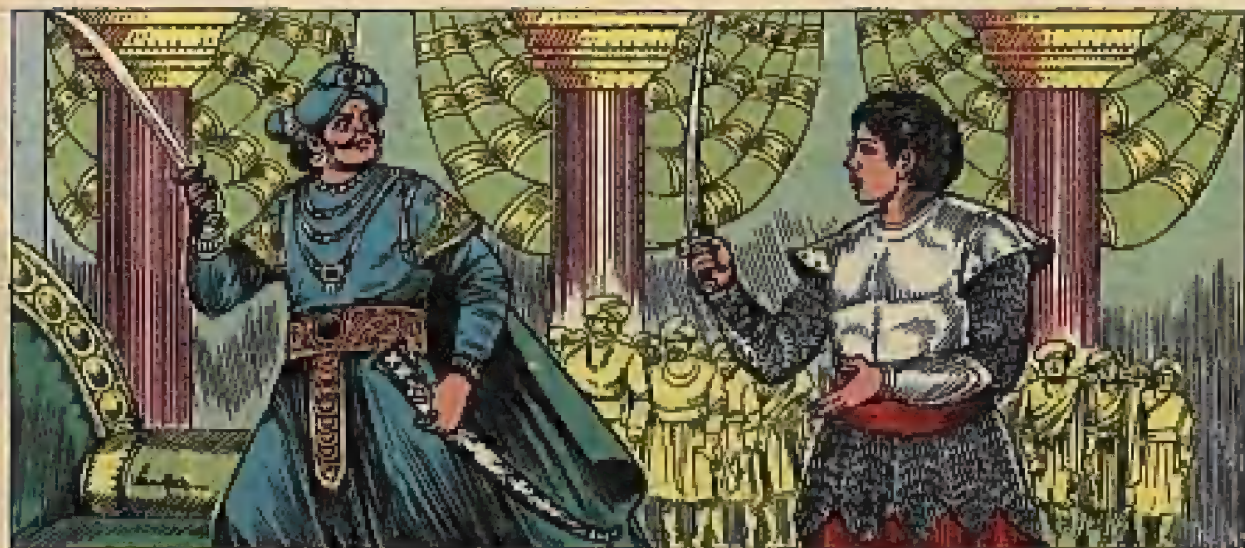
The king wanted to try it by putting it around the stone.

"My Lord, the armour is used by soldiers, not by stones. If you wish to try it, please try it while it is on my person," said the soldier. He then put on the armour.

The king unsheathed his sword and was about to strike the soldier's armour with it. The soldier at once unsheathed his own sword and was ready to fight.

The king got annoyed. But the soldier said, "Why, my lord, is the armour expected to be used by someone who will volunteer to be struck by an enemy? Isn't an armour meant for a soldier who ought to know how to protect himself?"

The king fell silent. He then paid the right price for the armour and gave a reward to the clever soldier.

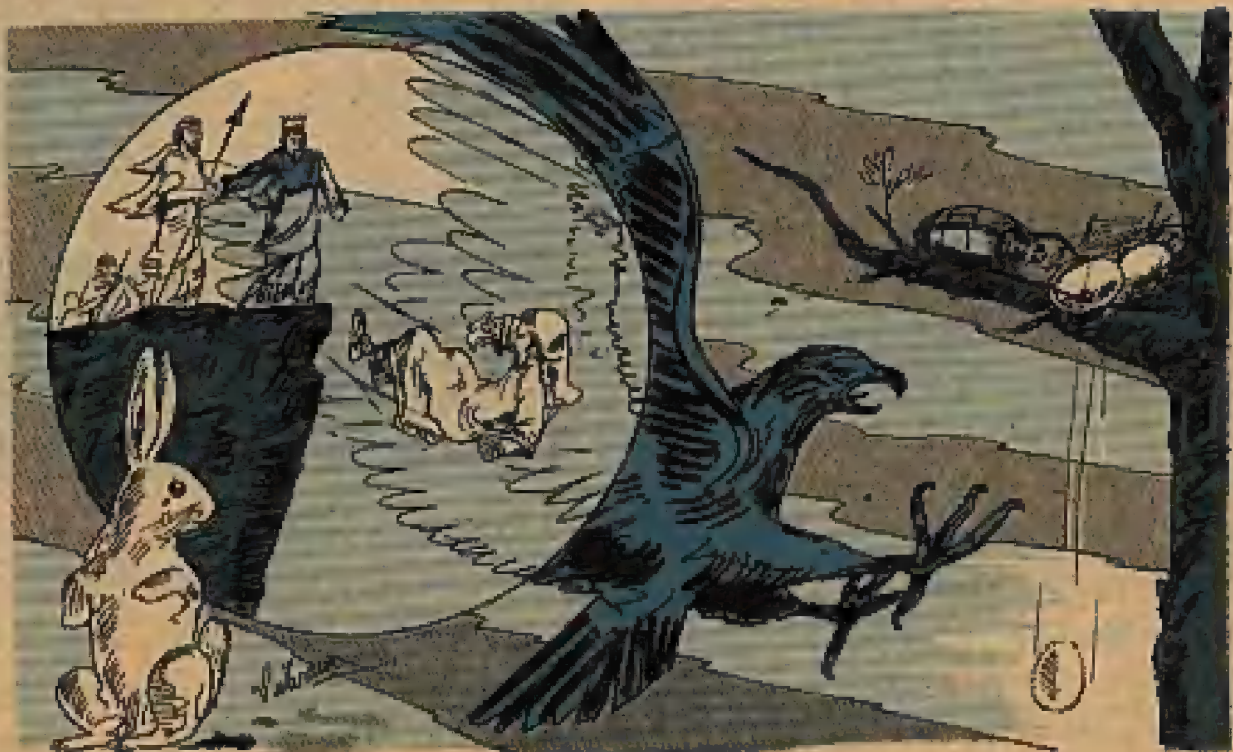


A FABLE KILLED A FABULIST

The famous fabulist, Aesop, was a servant of King Croesus. Once the king sent him to pay some money to the priests at Delphi - the place of oracles. The priests, somehow took offence with what Aesop told them. They harassed him. In order to teach them how they should behave towards a guest, Aesop narrated the fable of "The Eagle and the Beetle": Once an eagle pursued a hare. The hare took refuge with a beetle. The beetle prayed to the eagle to spare his guest, but the eagle killed the hare. Enraged, the beetle rolled down the eagle's eggs from their nest time and again. At last the eagle laid eggs on God Jupiter's lap. But the beetle threw dirt on the God's lap and the God involuntarily shook the dirt, in the process shaking the eggs off! Then the beetle told Jupiter everything and Jupiter realised that the beetle's wrath was just. The eagle, by killing the beetle's guest, had committed an unpardonable sin.

The Delphian priests took even greater offence at the story. They threw Aesop down a hill to his death.

Thus was a genius killed by a foolish and cruel gang.



A puff of floating cloud covered the moon. The moonlight became dim. That was the time when our visitors were coming out of the quiet compound of the Taj Mahal.

Like a dream vanishing as one slowly wakes up, the great monument was getting more and more faint in the dim moonlight when the party was leaving it.

"Who designed the Taj?" asked Ravi.

"A renowned Persian architect named Ustad Isa. Under his direction worked 20,000 craftsmen from India, Turkey, Persia, France and Italy. It took them 20 years to complete the work. Then, there was a gifted French craftsman called Austin of Bordeaux. He prepared marvellously artistic gold covers for the two tombs inside. The gold covers were studded with gems. They are, of course, taken away by invaders.

In the course of having dinner, Mr. Singh, Ravi's uncle, proposed to drive them to Fatehpur Sikri, the next day. The boys were so enthusiastic about it that Dr. Murty could not say 'No' to it. In the morning he informed his wife over tele-

THE DESERTED

phone why they would be late in returning to Delhi.

The first half of the day was spent in having a hurried look at the other monuments of



Agra, the Agra Fort being the most important of them.

It was a pleasant afternoon when they set out for Fatehpur Sikri, a twentyfive-mile drive.

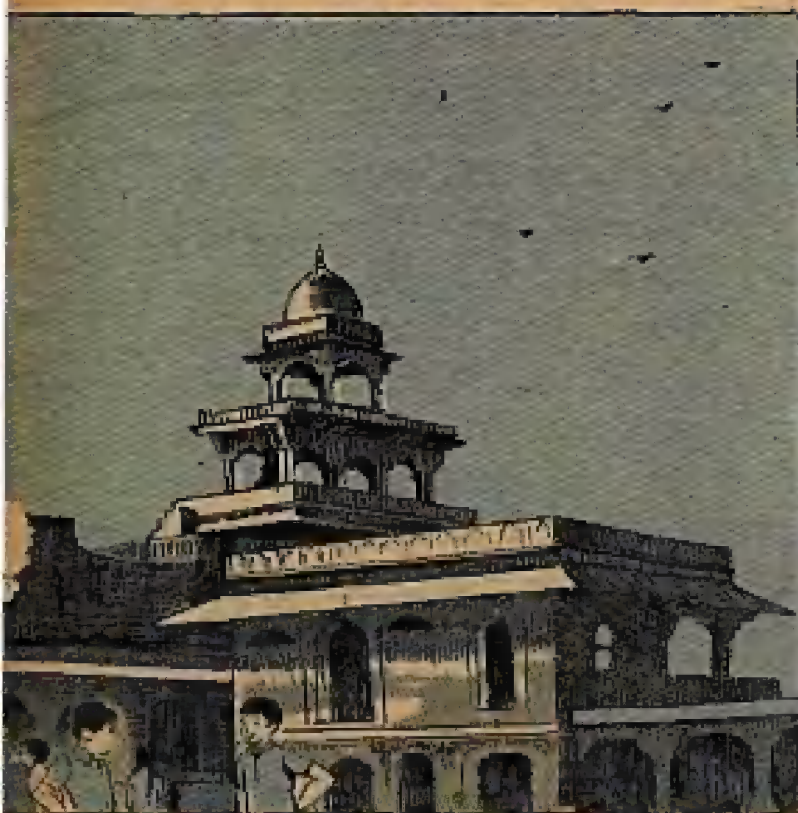
"But it is incredibly beautiful!"

CITADEL

exclaimed Ravi as they reached their destination.

"It is!" agreed Raman.

"Unlike Agra, this was a city entirely built by Akbar,"



said Dr. Murty. They entered through what was known as the Agra Gate. The deserted city, about 7 miles in circumference, stood on a rocky platform, overlooking miles and miles of fields

below it.

There was the magnificent Diwan-i-Aaam, inside which Akbar sat in judgement. Nearby was the Diwan-i-Khas, where the emperor met his officers and foreign ambassadors privately.

"It was here that a group of Englishmen met Akbar. They were just amazed to see this city, which was far superior in splendour to their London," commented Mr. Singh.

They saw the palace of Jodh Bai, the Rajput queen who continued her Hindu rituals though married to a Moghul and grew *Tulsi* plants in her apartments. There was the *Panch Mahal*—a five-storeyed house beginning with 84 columns to support it and ending up with only four columns to hold its top roof—from which the emperor enjoyed the distant view.

"This is Birbal's palace!" said Mr. Singh, drawing the party's attention to a richly carved building.

"Birbal's palace!"—the two boys shouted simultaneously, clapping their hands.

"Do you know, Ravi, how some of the courtiers of Akbar grew jealous of him and tried

to finish him? They tutored Akbar's barber to suggest to the emperor that he ought to find out how his ancestors lived in heaven! Further, the barber suggested that Birbal should be placed under a pile of hay and the pile should be put to fire. Birbal's soul would thereby go to heaven and meet the emperor's ancestors. Well, do you know what Birbal did? He managed to dig a secret tunnel from the platform on which he was to be burnt, to his home. Then, when they put fire to the pile, he slipped into the tunnel and escaped. Later, he appeared before Akbar and said that all was well with his ancestors except that they had no barber to shave them! Akbar decided to send his own barber to heaven in the same process. The barber fell at Birbal's feet and confessed to the conspiracy. Interesting, isn't it? This must have happened somewhere here!" said Raman enthusiastically.

"And you remember the other episode? Once while Birbal was asleep in his palace—must be this palace . . ."

But Raman's narration was interrupted by Dr. Murty. "My boy, let me tell you for the sake of history, that although

this building is popularly called Birbal's Palace, it is doubtful if he really lived here. And, for your information, such stories are not based on facts. Birbal must have been an extremely witty man, a dear friend and a minister of Akbar. That is why he is made a party to so many humorous episodes!"

"Really. . .? In that case, we ought to forget all these stories!" said Ravi.

"Why should you? Enjoy them by all means—as stories!" asserted Dr. Murty.

"I do not understand why Akbar chose this place for his capital and why he deserted it!" observed Raman.

"Here lived a saint, Sheikh Salim Chisti. It is with his blessings that Akbar got a son. Out of his devotion for the saint, Akbar decided to be near him. So he built the capital here. But life here proved difficult because of scarcity of water. That is why the city had to be abandoned," informed Dr. Murty.

"Some say that the saint did not like his peaceful abode changing into a city. Akbar led the whole population away leaving the saint in peace!" said Mr. Singh.



LET US KNOW

Are the stories of the epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, true? Did the battles really take place?

*Piraz A. Khambhutta,
Ahmedabad.*

While most of the people of India have believed—and that too for ages—that the events narrated in those two great epics are true, some people have suggested that they were imaginary. Some think that they are allegorical.

The answer to this question cannot be a point blank Yes or No. Renowned scholars and sages believed that they are basically true. But those great poets, Valmiki and Vyasa, were not writing factual reports in verse! Their poetic inspiration, their knowledge of such factors which control the human life and the events in the world, the truth as they had realised it—all have found expression in their poetry. Allegory and symbolism too are there in abundance, mixed with actual happenings.

As is well known, Valmiki and Vyasa were great seers. When they looked at an event, they did not fail to take note of such subtle forces which were working behind the events. That is why we find in their narration men and gods arrayed together.

Kurukshetra, where the Mahabharata war was fought, has been located at a place not far from Delhi. It is an unbroken tradition that identifies the site. Such a tradition can be accepted as a valid evidence. Besides, there are many historical evidences in support of many other incidents described in the epics. There is no solid reason to dismiss the basic stories they present, as imaginary.

(Readers are requested not to send new questions for a few months. Let your magazine finish answering at least a part of the backload of questions.)

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. S. G. Seshagiri



Mr. Mohan D. Desai

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs .25/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for the January '80 goes to :
Master Rajesh R. Sharma, 10 Moonstone Apartment,
65/E Linking Road, Santacruz (West), Bombay - 400 054.

The Winning Entry : 'Roots to Care' - 'Grains to Share'



PICKS FROM
OUR MAIL BAG

Dear Sir,

Despite some (be sure, not all!) old-style illustrations and some dull stories (be sure, not all!) the Chandamama is one of the few magazines in English which one would care to preserve. For your information, I have travelled widely in the English-speaking world and my hobby is to read and compare magazines!

What I like in your magazine is its dynamism. For example, you used to devote a page to phrases and proverbs. Later you devoted that page to English usage. Now you are devoting it to memorable moments from history. For these as well as the other features, I really admire the research your editorial team must be doing. Please keep it up!

R. K. Das, Delhi.

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1st March 1980

B. VISWANATHA REDDI
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Results of Chandamama—Camlin Colouring Contest No. 12 (English)

1st Prize: Hardip Singh Walla, Burdwan. 2nd Prize: Durdana Y. Mirya, Bombay.
3rd Prize: K. S. R. Alexander, Bombay. Consolation Prizes: Uma Bhal Chandra Dhawan, Bombay. Sri Munkap Khimhun, New Delhi. Vidhya Srinivasan, Madras. M. S. Vithal, Lucknow. Pankaj M. Chitnis, Domivali.

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SUBJECT	MARKS	PERCENTAGE
ENGLISH	100	85
RECORD	100	80
MATHEMATICS	100	92
SOCIAL STUDIES	100	76
SCIENCE	100	74
DRAWING	100	90
GRAND TOTAL	A	A
TOTAL MARKS	800	597
PERCENTAGE	V.V	90

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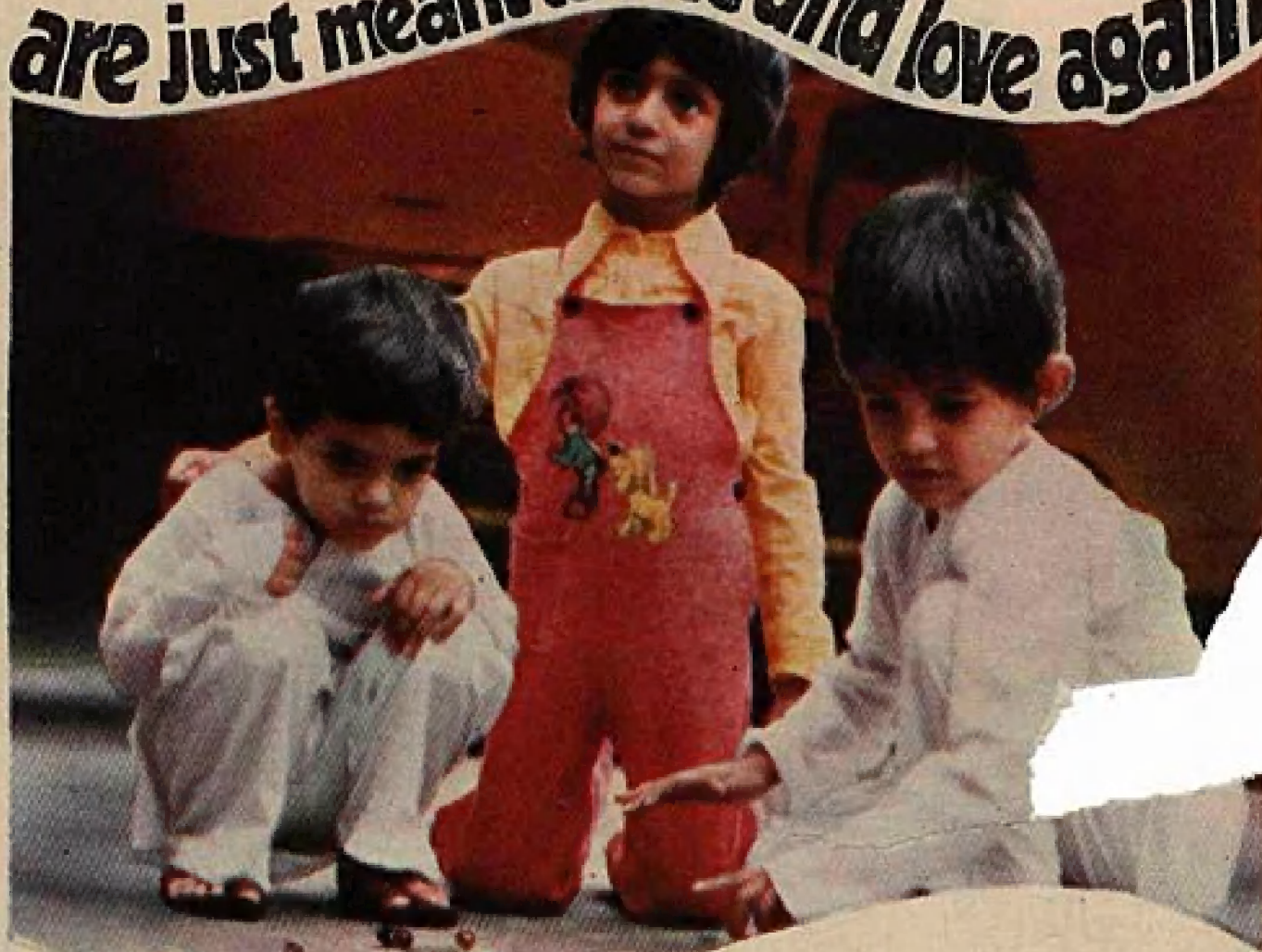
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